United Nations E/AC.51/2015/L.4/Add.12

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
25 June 2015

Original: English

**Committee for Programme and Coordination**
**Fifty-fifth session**
1-26 June 2015
Agenda item 7
**Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-fifth session**

# Draft report

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**Addendum**

## Programme questions: evaluation
(*Item 3 (b)*)

### Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on strengthening the role of evaluation and the application of evaluation findings on programme design, delivery and policy directives

1. At its 3rd meeting, on 2 June 2015, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on strengthening the role of evaluation and the application of evaluation findings on programme design, delivery and policy directives (A/70/72).

2. The Director of the Inspection and Evaluation Division of OIOS introduced the report and responded to questions raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

**Discussion**

3. Delegations expressed appreciation for the quality of the report and agreed overall with its results and recommendations to strengthen evaluation. The importance and value of continuing to receive the type of information presented in the report was also noted. Some delegations noted that the report responded to previous comments of the Committee.

4. As concerns the methodology used, a delegation sought clarification regarding the 31 Secretariat entities that had been interviewed for the report.

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5. Several delegations recognized the importance of the evaluation function to increasing the effectiveness of the Organization. Delegations expressed concern, however, over the insufficient use of evaluation in improving programmes, the minimal follow-up to evaluations, and inadequate staff competencies for conducting evaluation. Delegations asked why the report did not provide recommendations on how such gaps could be addressed in order to strengthen evaluation in the Organization.

6. Delegations noted in particular that the limited buy-in for evaluation from senior management and staff was discouraging and were concerned that the evaluation culture in the Organization continued to be unsupportive. Some delegations remarked that greater leadership and increased support from senior management would encourage a more robust culture of evaluation and better-quality evaluation reports. A delegation highlighted resolution 64/259 and the stronger accountability framework advocated in that resolution.

7. Delegations also raised serious concerns regarding the overall decline in the quality of evaluation reports in 2012-2013 compared with those in 2010-2011, as well as the stagnant percentage of entities responding that they used evaluation information to report to legislative bodies. Questions were raised as to why evaluations were not being used more to inform legislative bodies. One delegation noted paragraph 19 of the report, in which it was stated that one notable improvement between the two bienniums was in the use of evaluations to report to donors.

8. Regarding the issue of financial and human resources for evaluation, some delegations raised concerns over their insufficiency and sought clarification as to whether that was the reason for the limited evaluation capacity reflected in table 1 of the report. Other delegations asked how existing resources could be better used to increase evaluation capacity and quality, including through better use of in-house expertise and avoidance of duplication and overlapping functions in the Secretariat. The use of entities with stand-alone evaluation units to conduct evaluations for co-located entities that have minimal or no evaluation activity was raised by a delegation.

9. Some delegations sought clarification regarding the recommendation contained in the report on improving the existing guidelines for planning and formulating the estimated resources (regular budget and extrabudgetary) for monitoring and evaluation activities. In particular, questions were raised on the meaning behind reporting on extrabudgetary resources. Clarification was also sought on the current reporting requirements of monitoring and evaluation resources in the programme budgets.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

10. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly endorse the recommendations contained in paragraphs 65 to 67 of the report of OIOS on strengthening the role of evaluation and the application of evaluation findings on programme design, delivery and policy directives and that, when implementing recommendation 3, the Department of Management take advantage of existing expertise in United Nations internal and external oversight bodies, as appropriate.**

**11. The Committee emphasized that a strong evaluation function continued to be a critical tool for assessing the Organization's performance, through which accountability could be enhanced and lessons could be learned to achieve stronger results.**

**12. The Committee emphasized that evaluation not only helped to improve programme design and execution, as well as the formulation of policy directives, but also contributed to the adoption of budgetary decisions, transparency, the effective implementation of intergovernmental mandates and the maximization of the use of resources. At the same time, it allowed Member States to follow up on programme outcomes in a systematic way.**

**13. The Committee took note of the fact that, compared with prior bienniums, there had been some positive developments regarding the Secretariat's evaluation function, especially through the strengthening of evaluation processes and procedures. Nevertheless, the Committee expressed concern that the overall quality of evaluation reports had not improved.**

**14. The Committee also expressed concern that there continued to exist major obstacles to strengthening the evaluation functions. The Committee emphasized the need for Secretariat entities to allocate appropriate resources to evaluation activity and to ensure that staff working on evaluations possessed the necessary competencies. The Committee also recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to develop a more robust culture for evaluation throughout the Organization by strengthening senior management support and staff buy-in.**

**15. The Committee also emphasized that the evaluation function, in particular self-evaluation, was an essential managerial tool and that senior managers had a responsibility to use evaluation to improve performance.**

**16. The Committee expressed concern regarding Secretariat structures for evaluation functions and the fact that there had been seven entities conducting minimal or no evaluation activity during the biennium 2012-2013.**

**17. The Committee welcomed the fact that the Independent Evaluation Unit of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reported to both the Executive Director and its governing bodies. The Committee set this as a case of best practice in reporting line policies.**

**18. The Committee took note of the fact that, in the area of promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development, a large quantity of evaluation reports received good or excellent ratings for the overall quality of their results section and, of those, the majority presented largely positive results, but that more evidence on the extent to which the Organization's outputs had contributed to development would be welcomed.**

**19. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to take further, concrete measures to develop capacity for evaluation within the Secretariat programmes, with support provided by OIOS and external oversight bodies in terms of guidance and methodological advice.**

**20. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to continue to make better use of in-house expertise, including, where possible, expertise available within OIOS, to carry out**

**evaluations in the different entities of the Secretariat, taking advantage of the experience acquired by the internal and external oversight bodies, and to ensure that all efforts are made to avoid the duplication and/or overlapping of evaluation functions in the Secretariat.**

21. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to continue to ensure that senior managers' compacts present adequate programme objectives and performance measures in order to fulfil given mandates in accordance with relevant rules and regulations and that the evaluation function receives due consideration in the performance appraisal of senior managers.**

22. **The Committee reiterated its recommendation that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to take concrete measures at the appropriate levels to ensure that the existing significant gaps in evaluation coverage and the lack of evaluative evidence on performance are addressed.**

23. **The Committee selected the following evaluations for consideration at its fifty-seventh session, in 2017: Department of Political Affairs, Economic Commission for Europe, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, substantive support and programme components of the executive direction and management components of the programme budget section on "Overall policymaking, direction and coordination": Executive Office of the Secretary-General, and Offices of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, on Sexual Violence in Conflict and on Violence against Children.**

24. **The Committee requested the following evaluations for consideration at its fifty-seventh session, in 2017: thematic evaluations on the work of the regional commissions (Economic Commission for Africa, Economic Commission for Europe, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia) based on the completed evaluations of each entity from 2015 to 2017.**